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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 EB-07 SAJ-01 BIB-01 /071 W
---------- 030085
R 031805Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6180
INFO USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01862

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PGOV GW WB US FR UK UR
SUBJECT: PROPOSED MEETING OF BUNDESTAG COUNCIL OF
ELDERS IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) BONN 415; (B) STATE 2117; (C) USBER 009

BEGIN SUMMARY. ALLIED REPS HAVE AGREED IN THE BONN GROUP TO TALKING POINTS THAT AN FRG OFFICIAL MIGHT USE FOR EXPLAINING PRIVATELY TO BERLIN BUNDESTAG DEPUTY WOHLRABE WHY THE THREE ALLIES AND THE FRG CONSIDER A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS IN BERLIN UNDESIRABLE. END SUMMARY.

1. AT FEBRUARY 3 BONN GROUP MEETING, FRG REP (HENZE) REPORTED THAT WOHLRABE'S PROPOSAL FOR SCHEDULING A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS (CE) IN BERLIN WAS DISCUSSED AT LENGTH AT THE JANUARY MEETING OF THE CE. BUNDESTAG PRESIDENT RENGER, WITHOUT MENTIONING THE FACT THAT THE ALLIES HAD BEEN CONSULTED IN THE BONN GROUP,
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TOOK THE POSITION THAT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR A MEETING

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IN BERLIN. WOHLRABE WAS ANGRY AND SAID HE WAS SURPRISED AT FRAU RENGER'S REACTION. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN TOLD BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE POWERS IN BERLIN THAT THEY WOULD SEE NO OBJECTION TO SUCH A MEETING.

2. THE BRITISH AND FRENCH REPS EXPRESSED SURPRISE, AS THEY EACH HAD REPORTS FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE MISSIONS IN BERLIN OF CONVERSATIONS WITH WOHLRABE ON THE SUBJECT. THE UK MISSION HAD TOLD HIM WHY IT CONSIDERED A MEETING OF THE CE IN BERLIN INOPPORTUNE AND HAD REPORTED -- SOMEWHAT OPTIMISTICALLY, AS IT TURNS OUT -- THAT WOHLRABE WAS VERY RECEPTIVE. THE FRENCH REPORT STATED THAT FRENCH POLAD LEGRAIN HAD EXPRESSED MISGIVINGS IN VERY CLEAR TERMS.

3. HENZE CONTINUED THAT WOHLRABE'S CLAIM OF NO ALLIED OBJECTION LEFT FRAU RENGER AND THE FOREIGN OFFICE IN AN EMBARRASSING SITUATION. THE FOREIGN MINISTER WAS THEREFORE PROPOSING THAT A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL -- PERHAPS STATE SECRETARY SCHUELER IN THE CHANCELLERY -- INFORM WOHLRABE PRIVATELY OF THE DISCUSSIONS IN THE BONN GROUP. HENZE DISTRIBUTED FOR ALLIED CONSIDERATION THE FOLLOWING DRAFT "SPEAKING NOTES" WHICH THE FOREIGN OFFICE HAD PREPARED FOR SUCH AN OCCASION.

BEGIN TEXT

SPEAKING NOTES

THE PROBLEM WAS CONSULTED IN THE BONN GROUP.
THE THREE POWERS WERE OF THE OPINION
THAT A MEETING OF THE

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01862

"ALTESTENRAT" IN BERLIN AT THE PRESENT TIME WOULD NOT CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING THE SITUATION IN BERLIN. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHARES THIS OPINION.

ANSWER TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

AS YOU KNOW THERE IS A PERMANENT QUARREL WITH THE SOVIET SIDE ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THE QA AS FAR AS THE TIES WITH BERLIN ARE CONCERNED. THE QUESTION OF MEETINGS OF THE "ALTESTENRAT" IS A VERY DELICATE PROBLEM IN THIS RESPECT. THE QA MENTIONS ONLY MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES (BUNDESTAGSAUSSCHUSSE) AND FRAKTIONEN. A SOVIET PROTEST WHICH IS ALMOST SURE TO COME WOULD FACE THE WESTERN SIDE WITH A VERY COMPLICATED INTERPRETATION PROBLEM. A LONG DISCUSSION WITH THE SOVIET SIDE ON THIS PROBLEM COULD HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE WORK OF BUNDESTAGSAUSSCHUSSE IN BERLIN. IT IS THEREFORE THE GENERAL VIEW THAT SUCH A DISCUSSION CONFIDENTIAL

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SHOULD BE AVOIDED AT THE PRESENT TIME. END TEXT.

4. ALL THREE ALLIED REPS EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH THE ABOVE POSITION, WHICH THE FONOFF WILL NOW PRESUMABLY RECOMMEND TO THE CHANCELLERY.

5. COMMENT: FONOFF DELIBERATELY AVOIDED ADDRESSING QUESTION OF LEGALITY OF CE MEETINGS AND WE BELIEVE ABOVE EXPLANATION OF WHY SUCH MEETINGS ARE UNDESIRABLE ADEQUATELY MEETS US POSITION. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT FRG IN 1974 REJECTED US REQUEST THAT IT TAKE UPON ITSELF THE BURDEN OF DECIDING AGAINST HOLDING

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A PRESIDIUM MEETING IN BERLIN. ABOVE "SPEAKING NOTES," WHICH HAVE FRG ASSOCIATING ITSELF WITH ALLIED POSITION, IN SUBSTANCE REITERATE THE POSITION FINALLY AGREED UPON IN 1974.
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